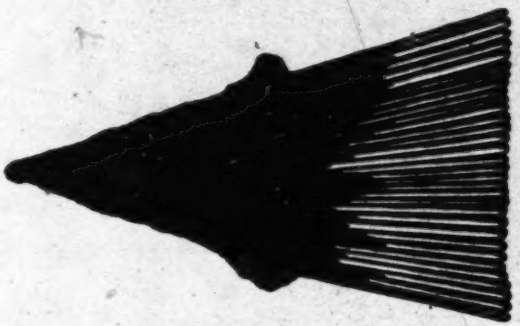
19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

at the bottom. The Red Karen, who take their name from their red garments, wear short breeches of red cotton and a short close-fitting tunic of the same color. These soon become the color of dirt from the generous accretions of that substance which adhere to them. These people use a blanket, which is red and white striped when new. They discard both the tunic and blanket in warm weather. Cotton is the most common material used, but in Toungoo silk is often used, either alone or with the cotton.

In Lower Burma, on the plains, it has become customary for the men to wear Burmese garments. The only time they put on their Karen garments, if they have them, is when they hold their "Bgha" feast. The different tribes to the east wear the Shan costume, with more or less variation, all the way to the Chinese Border.

The Karen men knot up their long hair on the top of the head or over the right or left ear, according to the custom of their particular locality, fastening it with a small triangular bamboo comb. No other head-dress is worn, except a piece of white muslin or other light-weight cloth, which may be put over the head as a turban or around it like a fillet, unless one should include the ornamental head-bands of the Karenni youth who, before marriage, wear necklaces of stones that have been handed down from father to son for generations, and ornaments for the head, neck, and ears, consisting of mother-of-pearl buttons interspersed with the shining wings of beautiful green beetles. All these are, however, given up at marriage and become the property of the bride.



A Karen Bamboo Comb

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
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bolder ones may remain, but spend their time under the houses or in the deeper shadows.

After darkness has come on and the party has finished the evening meal, the young men make the round of the village, hunting for any of the girls who have had the temerity to remain. Those who are caught are subjected to good-natured badgering and perhaps to pretended abduction. Shouting, the noise of the instruments, and the slaps on the floor and sides of the house with bamboos split at one end into six or eight strips, accompany this hunt for the maidens. Such sport does not degenerate into ill-treatment of the girls, if they are caught, even though the men have indulged in liquor; but the fun is certain to be kept up all night, and sometimes the scant partitions between the living-rooms of the village families are removed, with the permission of the chief, to enable the visitors to circulate the more freely throughout the village-house.

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Among the Shwegin Karen a vestige of wife-purchase appears to have survived. I am told that as night comes on the intermediary and the visiting elders place a jacket and skirt on a winnowing-tray and carry them to the parents of the bride as "ta k'ner" or "things that will win." The local elders, who are present with the parents, decline to accept the garments as being of too little value. The intermediary retires to return with some added articles—a headdress, bracelets, and beads. The parents and village elders are not yet satisfied, and the intermediary has to add a silver head-band, earrings, and a lump of silver to the things on his tray, before he is regarded as offering a sufficient price. A bottle of liquor is now brought out and drunk by way of sealing the bargain, and the village elders announce that "the price is paid." Among these same people it is customary for the elders, on the morning of the second day of the wedding-feasts, to send the bridegroom and his young men out on a hunt. The game taken must be brought back by the groom on his own shoulders and carried by him to the house of the bride. This hunt is his last with his fellows and his first foraging expedition for the household he is establishing.

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On the last evening of the feasts a ceremony used to be performed that is rarely seen nowadays. I have been informed that it was the main part of the marriage-feasts, signifying the uniting of husband and wife. Its name was "Hpo nya mo, hpo nya pa," and meant "Children tease mother; children tease father." For this ceremony the bride prepared a cock and a hen, which were boiled whole, and she also cooked a pot of rice. These were placed in the